

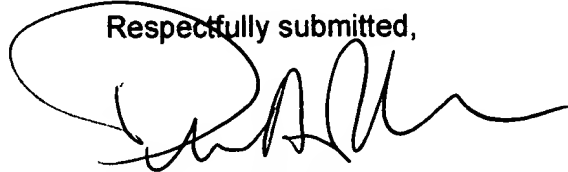
(presumably 14) & 15 standing rejected, and claims 4, 5, 8, 12, 13 & 16 standing objected to, but allowable.

By the present response, claims 1-2 & 9-10 are cancelled and withdrawn from prosecution, with the limitations of these claims added to claims 4 & 12, respectively, which are hereby amended to stand as independent claims. Claims 3 & 6, as well as claims 11 & 14 have been amended to depend from new independent claims 4 & 12, respectively. Claims 7, 8, and claims 15 & 16 remain in the original form, indirectly depending from currently amended claims 4 and 12, respectively. As such, the present amendment leaves claims 3-8 & 11-16 for consideration upon entry of the present amendment. Re-consideration and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested in view of the above amendment and the following remarks.

By the present Office Action, Claims 4, 5, 8, 12, 13 & 16 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, Applicant hereby amends claim 4 to stand as an independent claim, including the limitations of claims 1-2, the previous base and intervening claims, respectively, and also to include the limitation of claim 5, as part of a *Markush* group. Similarly, Applicant hereby amends claim 12 to stand as an independent claim including the limitations of claim 9-10, the previous base and intervening claims, respectively, and also to include the limitation of claim 13, as part of a *Markush* group. The remaining claims, claims 3, 6-8 and claims 11, 14-16 have been amended, or remain in original form, to be dependent from new independent claims 4 & 12, respectively. Applicant respectfully submits that these claims are allowable for the same reasons that claims 4 & 12 are allowable. Applicant, therefore, respectfully submits that the claims currently remaining for consideration in the present application are in condition for immediate allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

If there are any additional charges with respect to this amendment, or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account 502294, maintained by the assignee to the present patent application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Robitaille', with a large, loopy initial 'D'.

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